

# Sample interview questions for teaching candidates

*Not every interviewer will ask you every one of these questions. However, if you are prepared to address these questions, you will leave the impression that you were prepared for your job interview, even if additional questions take you by surprise.*

**Key to good responses:** Give specific examples to illustrate and back up what you say about yourself. Don't just speak in vague, general terms.

- What would your dream school look like?
- Share with me what you think a good piece of mathematics is - something you really like.
- How would you make math class great for the students who feel like the "dumb kid?"
- Explain how these will impact what goes on in your math classroom: Common Core State Standards for Mathematics? Common Core Math Practices? NCTM's Principles and Standards for School Mathematics?
- How do you determine what you teach?
- Why did you choose to become a math teacher?
- What is your relationship with mathematics? Why do you love it and why should anyone care about it?
- How do you make the content relevant and engaging for all learners? How do you make the content more accessible?
- Tell me about a lesson that went well and why.
- Tell me about a lesson that didn't go well and why. How might you or did you improve that lesson?
- What is your expertise with technology and Web 2.0 tools?
- How do you use technology in the classroom? As a personal/professional learner?
- What skills and technologies are you most interested in improving upon or learning?
- Do you find any particular courses/subjects/topics intimidating? (Think through this question – don't get trapped with this one!)
- What professional materials (books, websites, blogs) do you read?
- Describe a typical day in your classroom.
- Which math is your favorite to teach and why?
- How do you teach coverage of all topics while teaching students how to think/problem solve?
- How would you work with a particularly difficult parent or student? (Always include a parent into a situation with a student as soon as the problem occurs!)
- How do you incorporate problems that promote reasoning and sense making into your classroom?
- How do you feel about implementing backwards design into your curriculum?

- How do you determine a student's grade?
- What is your homework philosophy? (Make sure you have one!)
- How do you know and what do you do when a student doesn't understand a concept?
- How do you differentiate instruction in a class with students who can't multiply and students who understand complex math ideas?
- Describe a hands-on activity or lesson to address the needs of kinesthetic learners while helping them understand math content.
- What were your favorite classes in high school and/or college?
- How do you get students to practice math?
- Give an example of a lesson when your students were really engaged.
- How do you get students interested in the problem solving process?

It is also getting more common to have the candidate substitute for a class, teach a lesson, and follow that up with some reflection with the interviewers (similar to a formal observation).

#### **Jason Buell said...**

I just read this article somewhere about Sergey Brin from Google asking his "hardest question" which was something like... "I'm going to leave the room and come back in five minutes. Teach me something complex that I don't already know." What I thought was interesting was that the guy who wrote the article said something about how Sergey figured that even if the interviewee wasn't going to work out, at least he could learn something from the interview. So...long story short, I think I'm going to need to figure out more ways I can learn stuff from doing interviews.

#### **Resources**

- [Sample Interview Questions](#) Updated Apr 02, 2012  
<https://www.evernote.com/shard/s88/sh/8718249d-dc92-4d33-9993-62c51174b509/4d7f2b13af3889dccc5934665d58593b>
- Math Teacher Interview Questions Posted by Craig on August 2, 2011  
<http://approachinfinity.blogspot.com/2011/08/math-teacher-interview-questions.html>
- YouTube – questions for math teacher interviews: <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=JJZrXsqmUrw>